

# OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

## **NOTICE** 14.5

March 28, 2012

**TO:** All Department Personnel

**FROM:** Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

The use of social media such as MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn has become a valuable tool for communication and investigation. The Department is in the process of developing policies and procedures concerning the use of social media for personal use while off-duty, as well as for official Department-related activities. The Department recognizes the importance of social media and encourages employees to utilize social media to develop situational awareness and as investigative tools in the course and scope of their employment.

Department employees who choose to use social media sites for personal use or Department-related activities are reminded to adhere to Department policies and procedures, including but not limited to, Department Manual Sections 1/210.35, *Conduct Unbecoming an Officer*; 1/270.20, *Endorsement of Products and Services*; 3/405, *Confidential Nature of Department Records, Reports, and Information*; 3/788.40, *Internet Usage Guidelines*; and 3/813.05, *Employee's Responsibility*, and the Department's Law Enforcement Code of Ethics, which are attached herein for reference. Furthermore, the use of social media sites for Department-related activities shall only be conducted while on-duty.

Any questions regarding this Notice may be directed to Captain III Carol J. Aborn Khoury, Commanding Officer, Planning and Research Division, at (213) 486-0400.



CHARLIE BECK  
Chief of Police

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION "D"

## DEPARTMENT MANUAL VOLUME I

**210.35 CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN OFFICER.** A police officer is the most conspicuous representative of government, and to the majority of the people, the officer is a symbol of stability and authority upon whom they can rely. An officer's conduct is closely scrutinized, and when the officer's actions are found to be excessive, unwarranted, or unjustified, they are criticized far more severely than comparable conduct of persons in other walks of life. Since the conduct of officers, on- or off-duty, may reflect directly upon the Department, officers must at all times conduct themselves in a manner which does not bring discredit to themselves, the Department, or the City.

**270.20 ENDORSEMENT OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.** The Department's position of providing fair and impartial service dictates that each employee must scrupulously avoid using his/her official capacity, title, or position in the Department to endorse any organization, program, product, or service when such endorsement is not approved and required in the performance of his/her duties as defined by the Chief of Police and the Board of Police Commissioners.

## DEPARTMENT MANUAL VOLUME III Revised by Special Order No. 22, 2011

**405. CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF DEPARTMENT RECORDS, REPORTS, AND INFORMATION.** All official files, documents, records, reports, photographs/imaging/*recordings* and information held by the Department or in the custody or control of an employee of the Department shall be regarded as confidential. Employees shall not disclose or permit the disclosure or use of such files, documents, reports, records, photographs/imaging/*recordings* or information, except as required in the performance of their official duties. The unauthorized use of information obtained through employment with the Los Angeles Police Department can subject the employee to possible disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution. This includes information obtained from manually-stored records, as well as information obtained from automated records.

**Note:** Photographs/imaging/*recordings* include, *but are not limited to*, imaging such as mug shots, in-car video footage, digital interviews, digital photographs, *audio or video recordings*, etc.

Supervisors in units having access to terminal points for City-controlled computers containing confidential information shall complete an Operator Security Statement, Form 01.58.00, for each employee having access to such terminals.

**Note:** The home address, telephone number, and other personal information concerning Department employees may be released to persons both within and outside the Department only with approval of the watch commander or officer in charge.

## **DEPARTMENT MANUAL VOLUME III**

**788.40 INTERNET USAGE GUIDELINES.** The use of the Internet or e-mail on a Department computer shall be restricted to "official Department business." Personal use of, or time spent for personal gain is prohibited. Violation of any of these guidelines may be considered misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

These guidelines are applicable to all City or Department-owned or controlled computers, (LAN, Personal Computers and Laptops) and telephone lines. This includes access to computers at sites and facilities that are owned, leased, rented, or utilized by Department employees. Department employees utilizing the Internet or e-mail shall cooperate with any investigation regarding the use of computer equipment. Department employees shall not:

- Gain access to or transmit California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) information through the Internet, including secondary dissemination of Criminal History Record information through a communications media such as Internet e-mail facilities and remote access file transfer;
- Conduct an unauthorized attempt or entry into any other computer, known as hacking, which is a violation of the Federal Electronic Communications Privacy Act (FECPA) 18 United States Code 2510;
- Copy or transfer electronic files without permission from the copyright owner;
- Send, post, or provide access to any confidential Department materials or information;
- Send private or confidential e-mail as delineated in Manual Section 4/105.15;
- Transmit chain letters;
- Send threatening, slanderous, offensive, racially and/or sexually harassing messages; and,
- Represent oneself as someone else, real or fictional, or send messages anonymously.

**Note:** Use of the Internet for certain investigations may require a deviation from the Internet guidelines. This could include the use of offensive language, impersonation, or use of an alias, and the accessing or downloading of offensive or explicit material. When conducting a Department authorized investigation that requires these tactics for investigative purposes, they are not considered misconduct.

In addition to these general guidelines, employees utilizing the Internet are advised that the Department has the right to access all e-mail files created, received, or stored on Department systems, and such files can be accessed without prior notification.

### **813. INITIAL ACTION – COMPLAINTS AND COMPLAINTS OF MISCONDUCT.**

**813.05 EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITY.** When an employee becomes aware of possible misconduct by another Department employee, the employee shall immediately report the incident to a supervisor and/or directly to Internal Affairs Group (IAG). This requirement applies to all employees, including supervisory personnel and managers (the rank of captain or above), who learn of possible misconduct through the review of an employee's work. Generally, the supervisor accepting the complaint shall initiate the Complaint Form, Form 01.28.00. Only supervisors shall initiate Complaint Forms.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT CODE OF ETHICS**

"As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind - to safeguard lives and property, to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder, and to respect the Constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession...law enforcement."